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## **ENGLISH LOANS IN LATVIAN AND NORWEGIAN SPORTS COLUMNS IN THE POST-WAR PERIOD**

The author of the article examines forms of English borrowings in sports articles in Latvian and Norwegian during the period 1946–2005. The present contrastive analysis reveals similarities and differences of anglicisms as part of the Latvian and Norwegian language vocabulary and tendencies of equivalent formation.

The collected data illustrates assimilated loans, hybrids and non-assimilated words. The English pattern shows a tendency to be more favoured in Norwegian than Latvian. Among non-assimilated forms we find instances of original forms with Norwegian inflections and hybrids where one of the components is English, but the other — Norwegian.

The attitude towards borrowing from English seems to be rather similar in both languages though with a stronger tendency towards openness in the Norwegian language environment throughout the whole period under research. It can be explained with several factors, such as the language typology and language contact time scale within the Norwegian speaking society and its English language competence. Though now preference for English borrowings has evened out, there is still greater openness to anglicisms in Norwegian than Latvian.

**Keywords:** English loanwords, Norwegian, Latvian, sport, newspaper, post-war period.

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## **АНГЛИЙСКИЕ ЗАИМСТВОВАНИЯ В ЛАТЫШСКИХ И НОРВЕЖСКИХ СПОРТИВНЫХ КОЛОНКАХ В ПОСЛЕВОЕННЫЙ ПЕРИОД**

В статье рассматриваются формы английских заимствований в статьях о спорте на латышском и норвежском языках в период 1946–2005 гг. Данный сопоставительный анализ показывает сходства и различия в употреблении англицизмов в составе лексикона латышского и норвежского языков и тенденции формирования эквивалентов.

Собранные данные приводят примеры ассимилированных заимствований, гибридов и неассимилированных слов. В рамках исследования выявляется, что заимствование английских слов более распространено в норвежском языке, чем в латышском. Среди неассимилированных форм можно обнаружить примеры

оригинальных форм с норвежскими окончаниями и гибриды, где один из компонентов взят из лексики английского языка, а другой — из норвежского.

Отношение к заимствованию из английского языка представляется весьма похожим в обоих языках, хотя и с более ярко выраженной тенденцией к открытости в среде норвежского языка, наблюдаемой в течение всего исследуемого периода. Это можно объяснить рядом факторов, таких как типология языка и временная шкала языкового контакта и уровень знаний английского языка в норвежском обществе. Несмотря на то что в настоящее время употребление английских заимствований выровнялось, открытость к англицизмам всё ещё остаётся более выраженной в норвежском языке, чем в латышском.

**Ключевые слова:** английские заимствования, норвежский язык, латышский язык, спорт, газета, послевоенный период.

There is a rather common assumption that the language is Great Britain's biggest export goods [Johansson, 1992, p. 65]. The present-day processes reveal that the dominant role of the Anglo-American world has been increasing the number of words borrowed from English. No doubt, it inevitably leaves an impact on different domains in the development of a particular language. The aim of the present paper is to trace linguistic similarity and difference in terms of the usage of anglicisms in the field of sports in Latvian and Norwegian in the post-war period, focussing both on the linguistic influence and the factors that have determined it.

A wide range of sporting activities were already established in the ancient times, however the term *sports* comes from the Old French (www.snln.no/idrett). In the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century this term was used by the British upper class referring to different recreational activities (ibid.). Having been borrowed into English, the term may well have furthered its spread in a global scale. In the paper the term *anglicism* denotes any borrowing from English without specifying its anglophone area. It is claimed that [Görlach, 2007, p. 732; Svartvik & Leech, 2006, p. 158] the differences between British English and American English are decreasing, as a result it is difficult to determine the source of anglicisms and once having been established in British English, Americanisms become Britishisms.

In Latvian word-stock the borrowing *sports* appears to be registered first in the edition "Svešu vārdu grāmata" [Dravnieks, 1886] meaning *pastime*, e. g., *riding*, *running*. Physical events used to be popular in the territory of Latvia long ago. Best evidence of Latvians' interest in games and plays, in the modern meaning 'sports', can be found in the Latvian folksongs [Čika, Gubiņš, 1970]. As one of the games can be mentioned the ritual with a kind of a disk, the symbol of the sun, which was stroked

and pushed. Although the mentioned cult activity has disappeared, the game with a puck is still alive.

The origin of the Norwegian word *idrett* in the meaning of sport comes from Old Norse. The term was first used to denote competence and skills both in the art and sports. The term has retained its meaning in the domain of sports, nevertheless the findings of linguists show that the English *sport* is used twice as much [Johansson, Graedler, 2002, p. 90]. The Old Norse word has preserved its meaning as *friidrett* in the name for track and field athletics.

The birth of modern sports originated in Great Britain at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and soon spread as a worldwide phenomenon manifesting its vocabulary in many languages and accounting for the English language dominance in the sports domain. Norwegian linguist Stene [Stene, 1945] in her research on English borrowings in Norwegian in the 1930s concludes that the largest group or one fifth of 530 excerpts denote terminology of sports. Latvian linguist Balduncīks [Balduncīks, 1987] having analysed sports lexis in Latvian, mentions the fact that its terminology includes over one hundred anglicisms.

Material for the research was drawn from items selected in articles on sports as extracted from the largest Norwegian and Latvian national newspapers, all in all 60 copies. Thus a cross-linguistic investigation in a diachronic aspect seeks to reveal the role of Anglo-American values in the two recipient languages. The collected data are divided into (1) the socio-historical context with regard to Soviet and contemporary Latvia vs. post-war Norway and (2) the degree of assimilation in terms of assimilated/ non-assimilated forms and hybrid words. The approximate date of entering the receiver languages has been determined by using dictionaries. The contrastive analysis (research of the material as published in five years with a time-span of 50 years: from 1946 till 2005) provides a number of findings.

### Assimilated Forms and Hybrid Words

#### *Anglicisms in Sports Language of Soviet Latvia*

The development of Latvian sports terminology has been affected by Russian, the closest language in contact in the Soviet period. It is revealed both in word-for-word translation and in borrowings from other languages with Russian as the intermediary language.

Thus, for example, until 1991 sports terminology in oral speech was mainly used in Russian [Švinks, 2004]. Although the newspaper under research had the largest circulation in Latvia, the sports column is not among the themes of major importance. In the eighteen issues of 1946, 1960 and 1975 only one new English borrowing — *presings* 'pressing' — was found [Cīņa, 1975].

"Cīņa", the official daily newspaper of the Communist Party in the post-war period, focuses on sports news in a couple of columns, listing mainly scores and covering the Soviet Spartakiad events, hardly ever descriptions of a particular game itself. It can be attributed to the fact that the media were used as an outlet for expressing government's views, as a political instrument and control in form of censorship. Within the lines of the then state policy of the former Soviet Union the themes discussed in articles of post-war period comprised domestic news including topics like lengthy speeches and obituaries of the state leaders, crops productivity, increase of harvesting, etc., did not require the use of new anglicisms. The vocabulary of the media in Latvian was restricted by constant repetition of the above mentioned themes. By suppressing information divergent from the then political views, the policy of censors was to differentiate between "our" vs. foreign or welcome vs. unwelcome word stock. Hence, if there are to be found new English borrowings in other domains, they were usually in their assimilated forms. Moreover, the fact that there were relatively few English loan words in the post-war Latvia can be explained by a limited contact with the westernization process in Europe.

### *Anglicisms in Sports Language of Contemporary Latvia*

The end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century brought rapid changes in the language community facing the globalisation processes with English as a dominating language. Articles of 1991 and 2005 contain more detailed descriptions of games and movements, however new borrowings have not been excerpted from the issues of 1991. This is due to economy in transition with focus on a number of resolutions and laws passed by the government and authorities that dominate in the newspaper "Diena" under study, a four page issue at that time.

Certain parallels between Latvian and Norwegian concerning borrowing occurrences in 2005 appear in assimilated and non-assimilated forms. Owing to language typology, the borrowed word is mostly in-

egrated into the grammar and orthography system of Latvian. For instance: *skeitošana* 'skating', *sērfotāji* 'surfers', *drafts* 'draft'.

The use of the term *draft* in Latvian is still rather uncertain. The borrowing has been registered with different forms of spelling in dictionaries of foreign words in Latvian, both with a short vowel *drafts* [PLSV, 2004] and a long one *drāfts* [ibid; ISV, 2005]. No doubt, it allows language users to use the most attractive parallel form of their choice.

### *Anglicisms in Sports Language in Norway*

The sociolinguistic climate of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is marked by the internal linguistic competition between the two written standards — Bokmål and Nynorsk, changes and spelling reforms in both the standards, and implementation of the so-called Samnorsk [Common Norwegian] policy to end the language struggle [Jahr, 2002; Linn; 2010; Vikør, 2010]. However, this language planning strategy carried out with a goal to develop one written standard in the period 1915-1964 finally was terminated in 1981 [Jahr, 2002]. As a result, there was a relatively weak involvement of the Norwegian Language Society, today the Language Council, in developing uniform strategies of standardization of English loans and dealing with English-American linguistic and cultural influence. Although in the post-war period we find some sporadic attempts from officials representing the language body to draw attention to the growing processes of borrowing, apart from accepting assimilated forms of some particular loans no significant measures are taken. Only in 1998 the Norwegian Language Council passed principles for standardization of English borrowings. Nevertheless, since Bokmål speaking community is rather anti-purist, attempts to assimilate the spelling of more recent loan words meet with resistance [Vikør, 2010].

The turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is characterized by preservation of the language from external pressure in form of English borrowings. Hence, the main language strategy set forth by several institutions is to ensure the future of the national language (e.g. a survey on the language situation *Norsk i hundre!* (Norwegian at full speed!) issued by the Norwegian Language Council in 2005 and *Mål og mening* with a subtitle *A complete Norwegian language policy* by The Ministry of Culture in 2008).

Throughout the whole period under study Norwegian media coverage of sports is quite analytic with frequent usage of English terminology. A number of borrowings belong to such sports as tennis and foot-

ball. Some of the borrowings are assimilated by the use of the article for nouns: *centercourten* ‘the centercourt’ [Aftenposten, 1946], *en sidehalf* ‘a sidehalf’ [Aftenposten, 1960]

Other examples include plural forms:

*tacklinger* ‘tacklings’ [Aftenposten, 1946], *windsurfere* ‘windsurfers’ [Aftenposten, 1975], *steeplerne* ‘the steeplers’ [Aftenposten, 1975], *stayerne* ‘stayers’ [Aftenposten, 1960]

The distinctive feature of Norwegian hybrids is their way of formation. They are typically made up with the first element in English and the second one in Norwegian. The first part of the compound usually is not declined and is in a singular form, therefore it allows to introduce the borrowing in its non-assimilated form. Thus:

*stayerløp* ‘stayers’ race’ [Aftenposten, 1960], *passgjengere* (*pacersløp*) ‘pacers’ run’ [Aftenposten 1975], ‘fitness’-bransjen ‘the fitness branch’ [Aftenposten, 1991], ‘fitness’-klubber ‘fitness clubs’ [Aftenposten, 1991], *hardcourt-mesterskapet* ‘hardcourt championship’ [Aftenposten, 1991]

In the last example describing equestrian events, the journalist has made up a hybrid word in the brackets (*pacers’ run*) after the Norwegian word, thus partly retaining the original name for the notion and further in the sentence supplementing it with the explanation ‘this new type of pace’. The Norwegian explanation introduces a new meaning in horse riding *passgjenger* ‘pacer’, while the English element might have been used for clarity of expression among people competent in this sport.

Norwegian press articles are quite open to English. It is reflected both in assimilated single words and word-groups which rarely are provided with a translation or an explanatory note, for example:

*birdie* [Aftenposten, 2005], *boner ut en indy grab* — *strekker armen i været* ‘stretches his arm in the air’ [Aftenposten, 2005]

However, articles on golf or snowboard are usually looked through by a small readership who most probably has a good command of a particular terminology in English. All golfing terms (except for *golf* itself) tend to be known to specialists only [Görlach, 2005, s. 22]. It allows to borrow the English pronunciation and leads to the snob value of the sport. The anglicism *birdie* (‘a score of one stroke under par’) has been included in Norwegian language dictionary [NO, 2005].

## Non-Assimilated Forms

### *Anglicisms in Sports Language in Contemporary Latvia*

New types of sports demand new equivalents in recipient language both for rules and names for sports. Terminology of new sports is often borrowed non-assimilated, especially if it is difficult to make a short equivalent. Journalists not being capable of producing equivalents in their mother tongue, quite frequently prefer to retain the original term though letters (e.g. *y*) and letter combinations are foreign to Latvian. For instance from Diena, 2005:

*freely, play-off, play off*

The excerpted anglicism *play-off* has several variants, hyphenated and as a word-group term. The non-assimilated borrowings tend to be written italics drawing reader's attention to code switching and inappropriate use in the text. However, recently there has been observed the increasing use of the Latvian equivalent *izslēgšanas sacensības/ spēle* 'contest/ game which involves exclusion' for the term *play-off*, a descriptive term accepted by Terminology Commission.

### *Anglicisms in Sports Language in Norway*

As mentioned before, in Latvian newspaper texts English borrowings are usually found in their assimilated forms while in Norwegian there is quite a widespread tendency to use English borrowings as a part of the Norwegian word-stock. Norwegian being a Germanic language of partly analytical type accounts for the presence of English elements in Norwegian. It is claimed [Graedler, Johansson 2002, p.77] that English as a first foreign language introduced in primary school education in 1935 has probably facilitated competence of the Norwegian society in English which in turn allows to convey the meaning with the help of borrowings from English.

The aim of sports advertisements is to sell different services and goods. The use of borrowings often accounts for prestige, especially to denote new terms and objects. Thus in Aftenposten, 1991 one can come across:

*work out, kickboxing, offroad/ mountain veltepetter 'bicycle'*

The Dictionary of Anglicisms in Norwegian [Anglisismeordboka, 1997] lists all the four above mentioned borrowings. Several parallel

non-assimilated forms can be found for the term *off-road*, e.g. *off-road*, *off road*, *offroad* and *kickboxing*, e.g. *kickboxing*, *kick boxing*. The assimilated form *kickboksing* is included in the dictionary of the Norwegian Language [NOI, 2005]

Some Norwegian linguists [Johansson, Graedler, 2002] stress the fact that in the first stage of assimilation nouns tend to have the English plural inflection –s. Thus:

*Go-Karts* [Aftenposten, 1960], *time-outs* [Aftenposten, 1991]

The Norwegian language dictionary [NO, 2005] for the entry *go-cart* provides two plural forms — the assimilated and the non-assimilated one. Some dictionaries have included all the possible parallel forms for the mentioned borrowing, e.g. *gokart*, *go-kart* or *go-cart*. For instance:

*Go-Kart* [Aftenposten, 1960], *midget* [Aftenposten, 1960], *tie-break* [Aftenposten, 1991]

The Old Norse element as in track and field athletics originally is connected with the names for skiing disciplines. Old Norse mythology mentions the goddess of skiing, and the famous Viking kings usually were characterized as skiers with exceptional skills. Nevertheless, such names for modern skiing sports as *freestyle*, *super-G* is of English origin. English as the intermediary language reveals its influence, for instance, in the borrowing *jetski* [Aftenposten, 1975]. The hybrid word has been dated in Norwegian dictionary examples already in 1969, but as a headword since 1995.

In some places terms and expressions not known to wide readership are written in inverted commas. For instance:

*"Olympic flame carrier"* [Aftenposten, 1960], *"the double"* [Aftenposten, 1975]

Other instances include an explanatory supplementation with a phrase '*the so-called*':

*ekstraomganger* — *med såkalt* 'sudden death' [Aftenposten, 1991]

The original form of the term *sudden death* in a 1991 year issue has been registered eight times. Although the writer has mentioned its meaning in Norwegian '*ekstraomganger*', it leaves the impression of pushing reader to use the borrowed form.



The excerpted English sports word stock reveal that borrowings are often regarded as a natural part of Norwegian. This phenomenon could be attributed to the fact, as already mentioned earlier, that Norwegian is a partly analytic and partly synthetic language that allows keeping forms foreign to this language, as well as lack of language policy by the middle of 1990s. Taking into account English and Latvian as being typologically different languages, the borrowed forms tend to be adapted. It also accounts for the fact that no hybrid words have been extracted. Nevertheless, the collected data show there is a tendency to retain the original form. Especially it is observed in words with letters, letter combinations and pronunciation foreign to Latvian e.g. *freely* and *play-off*, difficult to be adjusted or find a one-to-one counterpart, therefore borrowing usually results in non-assimilated forms. Though language contact time scale within the Norwegian speaking society and its English language competence have deeper roots than in Latvian, due to the political changes in Latvia at the end of the 1980s, English now is ranking high as a donor language in newspaper articles. Intensive borrowing reflects lack of corresponding words in Latvian, the desire to play with the English language and the existing trace of English prestige.

Borrowings in the domain of sports in Latvian and Norwegian demonstrate that the leading role of Anglophone states as the main modern sports exporter and the globalisation processes go hand in hand with desire of language users to expand their vocabulary with necessary means of expression — assimilated/ non-assimilated forms and hybrids.

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